

Adjournment Motion

changes in northern benefits for those who must travel and live away from home working in the resource sectors.

There should also be changes in tax deductions for those having to face the burden of child care costs. The budget should have included increases in child tax credits. There are a variety of measures which would be progressive, confidence building and which would send a clear signal to Canadians that this government has a policy and a strategy and that need the co-operation of Canadians from every region. But as a result of the lack of direction and the introduction of punitive measures, Canadians are now pitted against Canadians, regions are pitted against regions and virtually every Canadian is against the Government of Canada. This is the kind of solidarity we have in our country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Mitchell: MacEachen, solidarity forever.

Mr. Riis: I want to end by reading the following quote:

What we need today are progressive economic, social and financial measures, but we are not getting them. That is why all across this country at the present time there is a rising tide of discontent. We find it everywhere. Criticisms are being levelled against this Parliament; criticisms that in the main I think are unfair are borne out to some extent by this Parliament itself. Today, for example, we have the budget debate; but . . . I counted at one time only 20 government supporters in their seats, and there were not very many more on the opposition benches. That goes to show that Parliament is apathetic, and I believe hon. members of this Parliament are disillusioned. The time has come, I say, when in the Dominion of Canada we need a forward-looking policy for the people of this country, and the government is giving neither the policy nor the leadership necessary to bring about the formation of it.

That was stated by Mr. M. J. Coldwell on April 28, 1939, and it applies today as it applied then.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*Translation*]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine East (Mr. Allmand)—Official languages—Publicity issued by Montreal festival; the hon. member for Fundy-Royal (Mr. Corbett)—Canadian National Railways. (a) Announcement of lay-offs. (b) Request that minister make representations to cabinet; the hon. member for The Battlefords-Meadow Lake (Mr. Anguish)—Indian Affairs. (a) Delay in on-reserve housing program. (b) Construction of school at Dillon, Sask.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. MacEachen that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking hon. members of the opposition for their contributions this afternoon. We all know that this is a very serious time. It is a very important debate. We on this side of the House are certainly more than interested in hearing the proposals of hon. members of the opposition, as we are in hearing from all Canadians concerning the ways in which we can come to grips with the economic situation now facing our country. I only regret that in their rush to spill out the recycled speeches of days, weeks, months and years past, hon. members opposite have been neglectful in facing the reality of the present situation.

Once again, we have heard a grand litany of condemnation about the failure of the government and missed opportunity, without ever once referring to the kind of realism which must be faced by any government in this period of time. We heard all the gimmicks. It was like watching the snake oil salesman who has instant answers to all the problems, except that once again hon. members did not find any way of bringing their remarks together with any consistency, rationality or purpose. In fact, once again we are faced with a very deliberate attempt to distort the basic reality of our economic situation and the answers that we have put forth. I can only say that it was deliberate, because they have done it before and we have tried to correct their indiscretion.

● (1630)

We have had, from the opening moments of the House today, attempts by members opposite in both parties to suggest that the measures introduced last night by the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) are somehow going inexorably to tax those with low incomes, that there will be an enormous burden upon the poor. We heard the last speaker from the NDP wax about single parent mothers who unquestionably in our society suffer the most in terms of income support and services. That hon. member neglected to mention, and we can only assume it was a deliberate omission because he is far too intelligent a person to forget such things, that of the 3.5 million women who receive family allowances, 2.5 million receive child credits. Those child credits will in fact be increased this year over and above what the normal increase was expected to be.

That, frankly, was irresponsible. I do not say that in any personal sense, but it is irresponsible of the hon. member to stand up in this House and try to foment fear and anxiety by the proclamation of false information. That is really an irresponsible act by someone who has taken an oath to be a